

III. Remarks

A. Status of Application

Claims 4-24 were previously pending, with claims 1-3 having been previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 4, 9, 10, 12 and 14 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 5-8, 11, 13 and 15-24 have been amended.

Claims 25-36 have been added.

As a result, claims 5-8, 11, 13 and 15-36 are pending herein.

Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

B. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 21-24 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, each of claims 21 and 22 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the previous base claim 4 (now canceled); there were no intervening claims. Similarly, each of claims 23 and 24 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the previous base claim 14 (now canceled); there were no intervening claims. Therefore, claims 21-24 are allowable.

C. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

1. Claims 4-7, 13-15 and 18-20

Claims 4-7, 13-15 and 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,869,571 to Ingenhoven ("Ingenhoven") in view of WO01/53839 ("Tajima '839"), with U.S. Patent No. 6,691,748 to being used as an English language equivalent translation of Tajima '839. Insofar as it may be applied against the present claims, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, claims 4 and 14 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and therefore any rejection thereof is no longer applicable.

Claims 5-7 and 13 depend upon and include the subject matter of amended independent claim 21 and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as noted above with respect to claim 21.

Claims 15 and 18-20 depend upon and include the subject matter of amended independent claim 23 and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as noted above with respect to claim 23.

For the foregoing reasons, the rejection of claims 4-7, 13-15 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ingenhoven in view of Tajima '839 should be withdrawn.

2. Claims 8-10 and 16

Claims 8-10 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ingenhoven and Tajima '839, and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0026732 ("Gordon"). Insofar as it may be applied against the present claims, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, claims 9 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and therefore any rejection thereof is no longer applicable.

Claims 8 and 16 depend upon and include the subject matter of amended independent claims 21 and 23, respectively, and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons noted above with respect to claims 21 and 23.

For the foregoing reasons, the rejection of claims 8-10 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ingenhoven and Tajima '839, and further in view of Gordon, should be withdrawn.

3. Claims 11, 12 and 17

Claims 11, 12 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ingenhoven and Tajima '839, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,275,951 to Chow ("Chow"). Insofar as it may be applied against the present claims, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and therefore any rejection thereof is no longer applicable.

Claims 11 and 17 depend upon and include the subject matter of amended independent claims 21 and 23, respectively, and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons noted above with respect to claims 21 and 23.

For the foregoing reasons, the rejection of claims 11, 12 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ingenhoven and Tajima '839, and further in view of Chow, should be withdrawn.

D. New Claims

New claims 25-30 depend upon and include the subject matter of amended independent claim 22 and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as noted above with respect to claim 22. New claims 25-30 are identical to amended claims 5-8, 11 and 13, respectively, except that new claims 25-30 depend upon claim 22, rather than claim 21 upon which amended claims 5-8, 11 and 13 depend.

New claims 31-36 depend upon and include the subject matter of amended independent claim 24 and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as noted above with respect to claim 24. New claims 31-36 are identical to amended claims 15-20, respectively, except that new claims 31-36 depend upon claim 24, rather than claim 23 upon which amended claims 15-20 depend.

E. Conclusion

It is believed that all matters set forth in the Office Action mailed October 5, 2010 have been addressed. Applicant has made a diligent effort to advance the prosecution of this application by canceling claims 4, 9, 10, 12 and 14 without prejudice or disclaimer, amending claims 5-8, 11, 13 and 15-24, adding claims 25-36, and submitting arguments in support of the patentability of claims 5-8, 11, 13 and 15-36.

In view of all of the above, the allowance of claims 5-8, 11, 13 and 15-36 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 12/31/10
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